

CITY OF MIAMI BEACH
Office of the City Manager
Letter to Commission No. _____

018-2005



To: Mayor David Dermer and
Members of the City Commission

Date: January 20, 2005

From: Jorge M. Gonzalez
City Manager

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jorge", written over the printed name of the City Manager.

Subject: **FILM OUTLOOK - 2005**

This Letter to Commission (LTC) is intended to summarize final 2004 Film and Print permit figures, as well as a 2005 outlook. As you know, the production industry has historically provided a strong economic impact to South Florida and the City of Miami Beach and 2004 permit numbers demonstrate that, for a variety of reasons, the production industry is back in full force. The Office of Film and Print issued a total of 1464 permits last year (up 12% from 2003) for a reported \$72,692,296 spent in Miami Beach alone (up almost \$12 Million or 19% from 2003). As has been consistent in Miami Beach for the past decade, the majority of this work came from Fashion Photography, accounting for just less than 1000 permits and \$45 Million.

These numbers represent some of the highest levels since the mid-1990's when Miami Beach was the global fashion capital. After a steep drop off starting in 2000, the industry has started to re-explore the area as evidenced by the steady increase the past three years. While a big reason for this is the re-emergence of European producers due to the weakened US dollar, other reasons include consistent and reliable infrastructure, sophisticated hotels and nightlife and an increase in Miami Beach's celebrity appeal. The permit numbers for Film, Television, Commercials and Music Videos stayed approximately the same as they did in 2003. This is encouraging since Miami Beach only hosted one medium scale feature film in 2004, "Transporter 2" (the first recipient of the State's Entertainment Industry Incentive) and minimal location work for "CSI:Miami." By comparison, 2003 included two feature films ("Stuck on You" and "From Justin to Kelly") as well as repeat business from "CSI:Miami" and since cancelled ABC drama "Karen Sisco." What has clearly filled in the gap and kept the numbers at the same levels was the large increase in locally originated telenovella production (Telemundo, Univision, Fonovideo, Venevision), as well as high profile award shows. Miami Beach will also see grand exposure during this year's Superbowl with a series of Bud Light commercials filmed here, starring Cedric the Entertainer.

The New Year promises to build on the success of 2004 and is already off to a promising start. First quarter activity includes feature films "Red Eye" (directed by Wes Craven) and "Retirement" (starring Ossie Davis, Rip Torn, George Segal and Jack Warden), "CSI:Miami," season 3 of the Golden Globe winning "Nip/Tuck," the "Dancestar" nomination show during Winter Music Conference, and a slew of commercials and music videos. Telenovella production is also on the rise with an expected ramping up of locally produced and originated work over the next year.

This May will see the return of "Miami Vice" to the community, 21 years after the television show premiered. This updated version is a feature film by series creator Michael Mann, starring Colin Ferrel and Jamie Foxx as the newly imagined Crocket and Tubbs. As the original series provided such influence on our community in terms of tourism, production infrastructure, marketability and style, this new project seeks to dovetail with what our community has evolved into, and will feature many Miami Beach locations during its production schedule, lasting through July. Other films on the horizon include a sequel to the Martin Lawrence comedy "Big Momma's House."

There will also be new opportunities in 2005 for the Film and Print office to market Miami Beach further as a world class production destination. One new marketing element is the "Black Book" developed in partnership with the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau (similar to the Heritage Guide or the Boutique Hotel book), called "Miami In The Spotlight", focusing on location filming in the community and providing unexpected looks of the town. Finally, the City of Miami Beach, City of Miami and the Miami-Dade Film Offices have partnered to adopt a new virtual one-stop permitting platform. This online system, www.filmiami.org, originated by the County, allows clients to do all their permit requests at one depot and receive a singular permit while maintaining individual municipality coordination, oversight and final approval. The client response to this system since the soft launch at the beginning of January has already been extremely positive. A media launch of both of these additions will take place February 8 during the Miami International Film Festival.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

JMG\CMC\MS\ow

c: Christina M. Cuervo, Assistant City Manager
Max A. Sklar, Acting Tourism and Cultural Development Director
Graham Winick, Film and Print Coordinator

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